

NSC BRIEFING

6 March 1958

BACKGROUND PIECE ON INDONESIAN COMMUNISTS

- I. Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) with 650,000 members is largest in free Asia.
- II. PKI is largest and best organized party on Java.
- A. In 1957 provincial elections, party polled 8.5 million votes (over 20% of total), a gain of over 1 million in 2 years.
- B. Although PKI strength concentrated on Java, it also has important following among plantation workers in Sumatra and oil workers in both Sumatra and Borneo.
- C. PKI also has excellent "grass roots" organization and is well financed; own fund raising probably supplemented by bloc.
- III. PKI has 32 seats in parliament (out of 240), controls 11 others.
- A. Four of 23 cabinet ministers are known or suspected Commies.
- B. Of 44 members of National Council, 18 have Communist or fellow traveling backgrounds.
- C. Air force chief of staff is Communist sympathizer, and air force is heavily penetrated.
- D. Eight key officials of administration below cabinet level are known or suspected Communists.
- IV. PKI maintains many front organizations.
- A. Most important is SOBSI with about 1 million members.
1. SOBSI moved in on management of Dutch property recently seized.
- B. Other groups include veterans (200,000), farmers union (150,000-300,000), youth organization (300,000-400,000), women's organization (400,000-500,000).
- C. PKI also runs a highly effective propaganda operation.
1. Communist newspapers account for about 15% of total